

January 24, 2012

LATE

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TO: Representative Ryan Yamane, Chair of the House Health Committee & Members

SUBJECT: HB2011 - Involuntary Psychiatric Hospitalization – Please Support
PRIOR TESTIMONY SENT BY MISTAKE BEFORE READING THE BILL

I am a mental health consumer advocate, and a former State Adult Mental Health Division employee with the Office of Consumer Affairs. I developed and coordinated the Hawaii Certified Peer Specialist program with over 130 certified peer specialists in the state, consumers with severe mental health issues, who are role models and provide hope of recovery for others in the community. I am also one of the few certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioners in the state through the U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA). I graduated last year with my masters in criminal justice administration from Chaminade University and understand the mental health and criminal issues that a person with mental illness faces.

These past few months, I have been a member of Senator Chun-Oakland's mental health and Medicaid task groups and have dealt with issues of involuntary treatment many times in the last decade. I realize this particular bill is necessary to hold people longer than the 120 hours of involuntary treatment in a hospital. I have known people with mental health issues and substance abuse problems that had been released early, but needed additional treatment. State statistics show that individuals have attempted suicide and others have succeeded after being released early. I, myself did not realize I needed help until I stayed in the hospital long enough to realize that medications would help me.

But the reasons for holding the person must be clearly explained to the individual, otherwise the person does not understand the need for the additional treatment. I have been told by individuals held longer that it was because the hospital had monetary problems and knew that they could collect from their insurance.

Please support HB2011 for those that need more help than they may realize.

Mahalo & Aloha!

Ellen K. Awai
Mental Health Advocate

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2012 3:29 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: robertscottwall@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2011 on 1/24/2012 10:00:00 AM

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Testimony for HLT 1/24/2012 10:00:00 AM HB2011

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Robert Scott Wall
Organization: Individual
E-mail: robertscottwall@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 1/24/2012

Comments:

Speaking as an individual I support HB 2011. I would hope that the Judiciary could continue to have a role but I acknowledge the import of this bill. We consumers know that there are times when safety comes first. Not only our own safety but the safety of the public servant who are at times our needed caretakers.